Table of Contents

1. Prologue
2. Chapter 1
3. Chapter 2
4. Chapter 3
5. Chapter 4
6. Chapter 5
7. Chapter 6
8. Chapter 7
9. Chapter 8
10. Chapter 9
11. Chapter 10

Prologue

Ava'yorn! Hello, again! I know it's been a while since I posted the book previous to this one, but I felt like now is a good time to upload the third book!

I want you to know that this book has the characters of Power of Three: *Dark River,* once again with some of my OC's added into it, and along with the Lake Territory from Erin Hunter's original *Warriors* series.

OC's in this Book:

Leafsong - pale ginger she-cat with a white front left paw and chest and green eyes; ThunderClan warrior; Chosen Warrior

Goldenfur - dark ginger she-cat with green eyes; Leafsong's mother; formerly of ThunderClan, now in StarClan

Whitefang - white tom with amber eyes; Leafsong's father; formerly of RiverClan, now in StarClan

Redswirl - black she-cat with a patch of red fur on the side and green eyes; ShadowClan warrior

Scarpelt - dark brown tom with many scars, torn ears, and blue eyes; ShadowClan warrior

Owlheart - brown she-cat with a white underbelly and amber eyes

~*~*~*~*~*~

Prologue

A dark brown tom was pacing in a small clearing surrounded by brambles and thorns, kicking up fallen pine needles on the forest floor. His scars were glistering in the moonlight, and his battle torn ears flicked impatiently. At the sound of bushes swishing, the tom turned toward it and saw a black she-cat in the shadows, barely

visible except for her gleaming green eyes.

“Redswirl,” the tom greeted. “I thought you weren’t coming.”

The black she-cat with red fur on her side, Redswirl, growled. “This better be worth sneaking out of camp through the dirtplace tunnel, Scarpelt. I’ll have to groom my pelt for over a moon to get this stink out!” She stepped into the clearing, hissing in annoyance as some brambles snagged at her fur.

“Keep your fur on, Redswirl,” Scarpelt, the brown tom, snapped. “I want to ask you something.”

“What is it, then?” the she-cat replied. “I have to go on the dawn patrol tomorrow, and it’s already moonhigh. I’m bound to get some sleep!”

Scarpelt bared his teeth for a moment, wanting to attack his Clanmate. He only lashed his tail once before asking, “Do you know about the Chosen Warrior?”

Redswirl answered slowly. “Yes…. The Chosen Warrior can rule the whole forest if they wanted to. It is the strongest cat in the territories. If you kill it, that power will be lost forever. The Clans could be destroyed.” She put on a puzzled face. “What about the Chosen Warrior?”

Scarpelt grinned. “I know who the Chosen Warrior is. It’s a ThunderClan she-cat, and we are going to attack her.”

Redswirl’s eyes grew wide. “*We*? Scarpelt, you and I both know that I would never kill another cat, warrior code or no warrior code.”

His blue eyes gleamed with amusement. “Who said *you* had to kill her? You can help with the fighting, and I’ll bring the final bite. So, are you in?”

The two cats stared at each other for a few heartbeats. Redswirl broke the silence as she spun around and headed toward the exit of the clearing, spitting, “Even if *you* do the killing, I still don’t want to be part of it. Count me out!”

Just as she reached the barrier, Scarpelt blocked Redswirl's way, anger in his eyes. "If you don't join, you're going to get killed, too."

The frustration in Redswirl's face turned to fear. She felt like the world was spinning around as she meowed, "Okay. I'll help you kill the Chosen Warrior."

Chapter 1

So I saw when I was coping&pasting this chapter in from Word that there's no chapter 2 so yeah. Chapter 2 will might be merged into Chapter 1 then. Gosh I hope this doesn't mess the whole thing up because I don't read these over when I copy&paste them. I guess this book will be 10 parts then? And 9 Chapters?

Ok carry on.

~*~*~*~*~*~

Chapter 1

Leafsong stood in the center of a dark barn, looking warily back and forth. Suddenly, two cats fell out of the sky and landing in front of her, not waiting one heartbeat to attack. Their claws, as sharp as thorns, sliced her sides, and their teeth as pointed as the ancient cats of LionClan pierced her ears and tail. A quiet voice echoed in the background, “Leafsong! Leafsong!”

She woke with a jerk as Leafpool called her name.

“Leafsong, are you alright?” the ThunderClan medicine cat asked anxiously.

Leafsong nodded her head. “Yes, I’m fine, Leafpool. It was just a bad dream.”

“Okay. I’m going to give you some herbs one last time before you go back to warrior duties.” The light brown tabby she-cat padded over to her herb storage. Just as she came back with a couple of goldenrod leaves, Dustpelt came running into the den.

“I think Ferncloud’s sick, Leafpool,” he yowled, his dark brown tabby fur standing on end at the thought of his mate being ill. “Please, come quick!”

Leafpool set down the leaves before she spoke. “I’ll check on her right away. Jaypaw,”—she turned to her apprentice, who was sitting quietly in his nest—“deal with Leafsong. I’ll be back soon.”

As she padded out with Dustpelt right on her paws, Jaypaw began chewing the goldenrod leaves into a poultice. He put it on Leafsong’s almost healed wounds, which only stung a little bit now.

“You can leave now,” the gray tabby tom meowed when he finished. “Be sure to come back if anything starts hurting again.”

Leafsong got to her paws. “Thanks, Jaypaw! You’ve been great help these last two moons.”

She bounded out of the medicine den and into the clearing. She looked around. The fresh-kill pile was surprisingly big for leaf-bare; three scrawny squirrels and two small voles. The prey was bony, but at least they have some food. *I wonder how RiverClan is doing.*

Two moons ago some rogues were stealing prey from RiverClan territory, Leafsong’s two littermates included. She fought the five rogues and returned some fresh-kill to RiverClan.

Leafsong snapped out of her memories as Squirrelflight called her name. The dark ginger she-cat was on the other side of the clearing near the thorn tunnel.

“Leafsong, want to go hunting?” she yowled. Leafsong nodded and hurried over to her Clanmate. They padded side by side toward the lake, sniffing every now and then for prey. Squirrelflight halted and angled her ears toward a squirrel who was scuffling around in the dead leaves for acorns or seeds. Leafsong crouched down and crept slowly and carefully to the tree nearest from the squirrel. Once behind the trunk, she flicked her ears as a signal to Squirrelflight to jump. Squirrelflight pounced, purposely landing a mouse length away from the squirrel. It raced toward the tree, being intercepted by Leafsong as she jumped in front of it, and killing it with a swift bite in the neck.

Squirrelflight bounced up to her. “That was *brilliant!* I’ve only done the once before when I was an apprentice.”

The two warriors looked down at the pitiful fresh-kill, which was as skinny as a twig.

Squirrelflight sighed. "This won't even fill one cat!"

"Well, at least we caught *something*," Leafsong tried to cheer up her friend.

"We?" the dark ginger warrior meowed in astonishment. "*You* caught it, and it was *your* plan!"

She cuffed Leafsong's ear gently. Leafsong sprayed dead leaves at Squirrelflight, and then pushed her back with her paw on the she-cat's chest. Squirrelflight fell on her side with a thud, her eyes closed. *Oh, no! Did I hurt her?*

Leafsong padded slowly up to her Clanmate. "Squirrelflight, are you okay?"

Her eyes suddenly opened and the dark ginger she-cat threw herself at Leafsong, knocking them both to the ground. A sharp pain shot up through Leafsong's sides. She stayed still there while her Clanmate got off, purring with amusement when she didn't notice her friend lie there in pain.

"I win! I win!" Squirrelflight was hopping from foot to foot like the ground was on fire, her eyes shut tight with glee. "I feel like a kit again! What about you, Leafsong?"

She stopped jumping around as she saw her Clanmate lying on the ground with blood slowly seeping from her sides. She gasped, "Leafsong! Oh, no. Oh, no!"

Squirrelflight helped Leafsong up quickly, but carefully. Leafsong couldn't help but listen to her friend mutter to herself while she leaned on her shoulder.

"Oh, StarClan, no! This is all my fault! I should have known better!"

It seemed like a moon before they got back to camp. As they crossed the clearing to the medicine den, several cats asked

questions, making Leafsong's head dizzier. They finally got to the den. Some cat must have warned Leafpool and Jaypaw, because they were already getting the herbs they needed.

"Leafsong, lie down over here, by the pool," Leafpool directed. The skilled medicine cat licked away the blood and placed cobwebs on Leafsong's sides. The blood was coming slower now, and eventually stopped all together. Leafpool took off the webs and cleaned the wounds again.

"Jaypaw," she meowed between licks. "Do we have anymore goldenrod?"

"No," the blind apprentice responded simply. "We used the last of it this morning."

"Mouse dung!" Leafpool spat. "How about marigold?"

The answer took a bit longer to come this time. "We have a few shriveled petals," was the reply.

"Bring them," Leafpool meowed anxiously. "Or the wounds are going to get worse!"

When Jaypaw dropped the petals at Leafpool's paws, she chewed them up, and laid the poultice on the reopened wounds.

Leafpool sighed with relief. "Now that that's done"—she lied down and tucked her paws under her chest—"how did this happen?"

Leafsong and Squirrelflight exchanged a glance. "I guess I'll tell her, since she's my sister," Squirrelflight volunteered. She faced Leafpool with serious eyes.

"This morning, after Leafsong came out of the medicine den, I asked her to go hunting with me. Leafsong caught a squirrel—"

Leafsong interrupted. "*We* caught a squirrel."

Squirrelflight turned to her. "Do you want more of your wounds reopened?"

Leafsong let out a *mrrow* of laughter before Squirrelflight went on. "So, *we* caught a squirrel, and we were doing a fun argument, like just now." Squirrelflight lowered her head in shame. "I cuffed Leafsong's ear, and then we started to play fight. I threw myself at her, and it opened her scratches. I'm sorry, Leafsong. I should have thought better of it!"

Leafpool walked up to her sister and brushed her tail sympathetically on her shoulder. "Squirrelflight, stop blaming yourself! Any cat could have done that, but I expect something like that from the two of you."

Squirrelflight's eyes lightened up and she let out a purr of amusement.

"Now," Leafpool started. "You tow should get some rest. And Leafsong, you should stay in here for another night or two."

At the thought of staying in the medicine den for two more nights, Leafsong's heart sunk. But she had to obey what Leafpool told her. With flattened ears, Leafsong meowed despondently, "Yes, Leafpool."

Leafpool nodded with success. "Jaypaw, stay here while I check on Ferncloud. The poor cat has a fever." She shook her head. "StarClan grant us a healthy leaf-bare!" She turned around and padded out of the den, Squirrelflight following her out.

As Jaypaw padded past Leafsong to the small cave where his nest was, he muttered, "Welcome to my life."

Leafsong felt sorry for him. He could never be a warrior, because of his blindness. For a moment she thought what it would be like to be a medicine cat. Swishing her tail to dismiss it, she knew her destiny is to be a warrior—the Chosen Warrior.

She placed her tail on her nose and let sleep take her in.

Chapter 2

!!ATTENTION TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY READ THIS BOOK AND ARE EITHER READING THIS BECAUSE YOU ARE REREADING THIS BOOK OR HAVE BEEN UNEXPECTEDLY ALERTED OF AN UPDATE FOR THIS!!:

Hello! This is Cheese from the future, or now the past, or uhhh

SO if you have already read this book (or if you look ahead to the next chapter) or even recall to the previous chapter, you would see my dilemma little young me was having at the time of first publishing this book on Wattpad. Well, do I have some good news for you today! THIS, RIGHT HERE, IS THE MISSING CHAPTER!!!!! Turns out that I must have completely skipped over it when I first typed it up (since when I wrote these stories I wrote it all out on paper before typing them). However, luckily, I still have the written draft of *The Betrayal*, so I simply found the missing chapter and finally digitalized it! So, what you are about to read, it is some NEVER BEFORE SEEN content of the Chosen Warrior series! This was such an unfortunate chapter to have missed too because an entire event relating to the plot happens in it :x

So then, without further ado, THE MISSING CHAPTER!!

Leafsong woke to some rustling outside by the medicine den. She figured it was just the wind, but then she heard some whispering. Curious, she got up slowly, her sides stiff. Right when she put a paw out of the den, screeching and yowling exploded in the hollow. Leafsong peaked out from behind the bramble screen that separated the camp and the medicine den and saw cats battling everywhere. Her senses finally worked properly. She tasted the air. Mixed in with all the blood and ThunderClan scent, there was a smell Leafsong hadn't encountered for awhile. *ShadowClan!*

A heartbeat before she jumped into battle, Leafpool was yowling to be heard for her to stay. "You cannot fight in your condition!" she

was saying. "Get back here and protect yourself."

Hesitantly, Leafsong obeyed. *Protect myself? What about protecting my* Clan? *I'm the Chosen Warrior, for StarClan's sake!*

She huddled in the entrance of the store where the herbs were with Leafpool, while Jaypaw was inside it, in case ShadowClan wanted to steal herbs. Not long after, two ShadowClan warriors emerged from the bramble screen. It was hard to see their pelts, but it looked like a black she-cat and a brown tom. They were as skinny as the prey in ThunderClan territory. Clearly ShadowClan was low on fresh-kill, too.

With a yowl of fury, the two cats launched themselves at Leafsong and Leafpool. The tom and Leafsong balanced on their hind legs, slashing each other wildly. Leafsong landed a hard blow on the tom's jaw, then punched his chest hard, making him fly out of the den.

Thinking that he surrendered, she turned to help Leafpool, who was pinned by the black she-cat. Leafsong scratched the she-cat's flank, making her lose her grip. Leafpool kicked with her hind legs, throwing the ShadowClan warrior out of the den, landing by her Clanmate.

Leafsong began to stomp over to the injured warriors only to be stopped by a call in the hollow. "ShadowClan, retreat!"

The two warriors pushed themselves up like they weren't even hurt. Leafsong charged into the hollow after them. Every ShadowClan cat was racing out of the thorn tunnel, some of them having fresh-kill in their mouths. Leafsong gasped. *They stole our prey! No!*

The black she-cat and brown tom were the last to leave. Before they followed their Clanmates, they looked back at Leafsong, then left. Leafsong was confused on their expressions - one was hatred, one was sympathy.

Leafsong turned her attention to her Clanmates - Graystripe had a bad slash on his flank, Sandstorm had a deep bite in her back, and Dustpelt had some scratches on his belly, but other than those few

injuries, the Clan was fine. Leafpool and Jaypaw came from behind her and began treating the wounds.

"Is everyone okay?" Firestar asked. "That was an unexpected attack."

Every cat murmured that they were okay, until Sorreltail spotted where the fresh-kill pile should have been.

"Hey!" she gasped. "ShadowClan stole our fresh-kill!"

Yowls of fear and anger rose among the Clan.

"Prey-stealers!" Cloudtail spat. "How *dare* they do that?"

"Silence!" Firestar had climbed up to the Highledge, his dark ginger fur a light silver in the pale moonlight. "I admit ShadowClan had completely surprised us and taken all of our fresh-kill, but we will not give up. Brambleclaw" - he turned to ThunderClan's deputy - "assign extra hunting patrols until we are full again."

The dark brown tabby tom nodded. "Will do, Firestar."

"Now," the Clan leader finished. "Everyone get some sleep. Be expected to hunt early tomorrow."

With that, every cat went back to their dens. Leafsong went to her nest in the medicine den, not minding the reek of ShadowClan or blood. She curled up with her tail over her nose. *I could sleep for a moon! For once I'm glad to stay in the medicine den.*

Chapter 3

Chapter 2 (it says Chapter 3 in Microsoft Word but oh whale)

Edit from futurish past Cheese: see last chapter's AN if you haven't to find the answer to the riddle above *thumbs up*

It felt like a heartbeat later when something prodded Leafsong in the side. She opened her eyes to thorn bushes surrounded her in a small clearing. There were pine needles and oak leaves mixed in with each other on the forest floor. Leafsong looked up at the sky—no stars, moon, or sun shone, making her shiver with fear.

Where am I? She thought confusingly. *What is this place?*

She pushed through one of the thorn bushes, wincing as it scraped her sides. On the other side, tall pine and oak trees loomed up into the dark sky. Leafsong padded aimlessly through the scary unfamiliar forest, forcing herself not to panic. She jumped as high as the trees as she heard a low growl behind her.

"Leafsong, I didn't expect to see you here."

She turned around quickly. Her fur bristled and she instinctively crouched, ready to attack, as she recognized the cat. "Hawkfrost!" she gasped. Leafsong cowered there, frozen in shock and fear.

The dark tabby tom stood there with narrowed eyes and a slight smile. "What are *you* doing in a place like this?"

Leafsong stayed frozen in her position, wary around the cat who tried to kill her. "I-I don't know," she responded slowly. "The last thing I remember is sleeping in the medicine den before I came here."

Hawkfrost opened his mouth to say something, but got interrupted when a brown she-cat with a white belly came through some bracken.

"Hawkfrost!" she snapped at him. "What do you think you're doing? *I* called her here. She's *mine*."

Hawkfrost growled and leaped at the she-cat, claws extended. The newcomer seemed to expect that, because she leapt during the same heartbeat as him. She easily pinned him to the ground, which surprised Leafsong, because Hawkfrost looked like he had a lot more muscle than his opponent.

"I repeat she's *mine*, Hawkfrost!" she spat into his face. She got off of him, allowing him to get up. "Now go," she flicked her tail as a signal to leave. "Don't bother us again, or you'll wish you never have."

As the brown she-cat gave Hawkfrost a final glare, he turned and stomped away, whipping his tail angrily. When he disappeared behind a large tree trunk, the she-cat turned to Leafsong.

"Sorry about that," she sighed. "I couldn't find you in this never ending forest!" She sat down and wrapped her tail neatly around her paws. "Greetings, Leafsong. My name is Owlheart. First of all, do you have any questions?" She muttered to herself, "Living cats always have questions."

Leafsong began slowly, "Are you a StarClan cat? Is this StarClan?"

Unexpectedly, Owlheart hissed and scraped Leafsong's cheek with her claws. "Don't you *ever* say that word here!"

Leafsong's eyes widened with surprise and fear. "Then if you're not from Star—"

Owlheart screeched and threw herself at Leafsong, sending her flying until she hit a tree, sending the breath out of her. Owlheart padded up to her and put her claws on top of Leafsong neck. "Then if I'm not from *where*?" she growled.

"Th-then if you're not from... the pl-place where my an-ancestors live," she stammered. "Where *do* y-you live?"

Owlheart leaned down, not moving her paw, to whisper in her ear, "Have you ever heard of the Dark Forest? You're in it right now,

she-*kit*."

"No!" Leafsong yowled. The gentle point on her neck began to fade, along with her surroundings. She opened her eyes to the medicine den. Her nest was ruined—scraps of mass and bracken were spread all over the floor and on her pelt. Leafsong's sides were scratched a little, and blood was running down her cheek, and lightly down her neck. *My injuries affect me in the waking world!*

"Leafsong!" Leafpool emerged from the storage cave with some herbs. "What in StarClan's name happened to you?" she mumbled around the medicines.

"Err..." Leafsong thought quickly. "I had a dream about fighting. I must have scratched myself."

At least half of that is true.

The medicine cat examined the wounds. She placed cobwebs on Leafsong's cheek and neck and chewed up some dock leaves for her sides.

"I don't know when you will leave!" Leafpool exclaimed when she was done. "You're always getting hurt. Now, you should rest for a bit longer—and don't get hurt anymore!"

Chapter 4

Chapter 4

It was a sunrise later, and Leafsong was looking out into the clearing with Leafpool, watching the snow as it floated down from the sky.

"I hope StarClan stops this snow so we medicine cats can travel safely to the Moonpool," the light brown tabby medicine cat was meowing. She turned to Leafsong. "I think it's time that you *finally* go back to warrior duties. Unless, you want me to scratch you?"

Leafsong let out a purr of amusement as she got to her paws. "I'm fine, Leafpool. Thanks for all the help—you too Jaypaw."

The gray tabby apprentice was sitting a tail length away. Only an ear flick gave away that he heard her.

She turned to leave, when Jaypaw called her back surprisingly, "Would you like to go for a walk in the forest?"

Leafsong wondered why the stubborn apprentice wanted to walk with her. Before she had a chance to voice her question, Jaypaw answered it. "I want to check if you walk alright in one last time."

"Sure," Leafsong responded. She waited for Jaypaw to get by her side, and then set off across the camp and into the forest beyond.

Leafsong gasped at the beauty of sparkling white snow on the bare branches of the trees and covering the floor and undergrowth of the forest. "Wow!" she whispered. "Jaypaw, do you see—"

Leafsong stopped herself when she realized what she just said. "Sorry," she apologized. "I didn't know—"

"It's okay," Jaypaw interrupted. "I hear that every day. It's fine."

They padded through the snowy forest in silence, until he spoke

again. "I know it's you."

Leafsong halted in her footsteps, her heart beginning to pound. *Does he know that I'm the Chosen Warrior?* "What am I?" she asked, scared to find out the answer.

"I know that you are the Chosen Warrior," Jaypaw told her calmly.

Leafsong was shaking with terror. "Did Leafpool tell you?"

Jaypaw shook his head. "No, I found out myself."

Leafsong slid out her claws and crouched as she prepared to attack. "Who told you? What are you going to do with me?"

The gray tom lifted his paw to show that his claws were sheathed. "Relax, Leafsong! All you need to know is that I found out *by myself*. I can help you throughout the dangers."

They looked at each other for a moment, until Leafsong meowed, "Thanks, Jaypaw, but I think I can handle it on my own."

As she padded back to the camp, Jaypaw called to her, "Fine! If you need me, don't count on it!"

Leafsong stomped to the camp, anger rising in her chest. *Why does he think that I need help? I have the help of StarClan, and my own brain!*

The wind had picked up now, and the snow was blowing so hard that it stung when it hit her face. She narrowed her eyes to keep it from going inside them. *Great StarClan,* she thought. *This leaf-bare is going to be terrible with all this snow and wind, and we barely have even one piece of fresh-kill!*

When the camp entrance came into sight, which was only a couple of tail lengths away, she ran through the thorn tunnel and into the warriors' den—almost every warrior was in there, sleeping.

Leafsong curled up in her nest. It was cold, because she didn't sleep in it for such a long time. *It's good to be back in my own nest.*

Chapter 5

Chapter 5

Leafsong woke to a cat coughing. She opened her eyes and saw Thornclaw, a brown tom with a golden belly, hacking loudly. All of the warriors were either stirring or already awake, except for Cloudtail, who was snoring softly.

"How can he sleep through this?" Sandstorm questioned.

"I don't know," Dustpelt replied. "He must still have some kittypet genes in him."

Sandstorm shot him a warning glance. Thornclaw kept on coughing, and finally Squirrelflight told him to go see Leafpool. "You're not going to get better staying here."

"And then we can get some sleep," muttered Ashfur, who was already curling up again.

Sandstorm got up and let Thornclaw lean on her shoulder while they headed to then medicine den.

Leafsong and the other warriors went back to their nests. She tried to sleep, but it was no use. As she got up, Graystripe saw her and meowed, "Now, where are *you* doing?"

"I'm just going out for a stroll. The wind and snow looks like it stopped," she replied. "I couldn't get to sleep."

Graystripe shrugged. "Same here. I prefer to stay in here where it's warm and cozy. But I won't stop you. I'm no medicine cat." He closed his eyes and muttered, "You wouldn't even listen to me if I did."

Leafsong went into the clearing and out in the forest. The half-moon shone between the few clouds in the sky, making the snow look blue. She padded in the direction of the ShadowClan border. *I*

wonder if they're enjoying our *hard earned fresh-kill! Fox hearted prey stealers!*

Leafsong was padding along the scent markers, when she heard some rustling on the other side. A bush was swishing, and then two cats appeared. Her heart skipped a beat when she realized them. *It's the cats who broke into the medicine den!* Leafsong slid out her claws and hissed.

The brown tom flicked the black she-cat's tail tip. As if as a signal, they both jumped on her and pinned her down. Leafsong struggled under the weight and let out yowls of protest.

The she-cat put her paw over her mouth. "Be quiet!" she whispered. "Just follow us, no questions asked until we tell you to. We won't hurt you." Her eyes softened. "I promise."

She slowly moved her paw away to make sure Leafsong wouldn't start yowling again. The two cats got off of her and beckoned her to get up. The tom brushed his tail across Leafsong's mouth and motioned it forward, telling her to be quiet and follow. He took the lead while the she-cat went in back behind Leafsong. The tom led them towards the way to ShadowClan's camp.

Oh, StarClan! What am I doing? Why did I let them take me?

Suddenly, they turned away, heading to unknown territory. Leafsong's paws were scraping on the dead needles buried under the snow. The forest around her looked the same everywhere.

A Twoleg nest came into view through the branches of trees and bushes. It looked like the one in ThunderClan's territory, with the door crooked and the glass panes broken, but much larger. The tom led her into it. The nest was stuffy, and cobwebs and birds' nests were hanging in corners.

"All right," meowed the brown tom. "Now you may talk."

"Why did you take me here? What do you want with me?" Leafsong blurted out.

The black she-cat let out a purr of amusement. "Slow down, will

you? Let's just start out with the basic stuff. My name is Redswirl. And this," she pointed her tail at the tom, "is Scarpelt. You must be Leafsong." Redswirl dipped her head. "It's a pleasure to meet you."

"It must have been a pleasure to fight me," growled Leafsong.

Redswirls's green eyes flickered with sympathy. "Sorry about that."

"It's fine." Leafsong changed the subject. "So, why did you want me to come with you here?"

Scarpelt looked at his Clanmate, expecting her to answer. "We... we need your help, Leafsong," Redswirl began slowly. "ShadowClan cat are getting really sick. We need all of the fresh-kill and herbs we need."

Leafsong shook her head. "ThunderClan is the same. We can barely even feed one cat, and treat one with our supplies."

Redswirl nodded. "We understand. We-"

She got interrupted as Scarpelt shouldered her and spoke for her. "No, we *don't* understand. ShadowClan is worse than ThunderClan-I can prove it! We barely have any patrols anymore, especially border patrols. We spend almost the whole day hunting, the healthy cats at least. Leafsong, you *have* to help us!"

Leafsong couldn't help to say no. *I am the Chosen Warrior, right? It's my job to protect and help the Clans!*

Scarpelt's eyes lit up with satisfaction. "Thank you! Thank you, so much!"

"Now," Leafsong finished. "I need to go. Dawn's going to be here soon. I'll see you some time later!"

On her way back to the camp, Leafsong realized that Redswirl didn't even look at her, and her ears went flat on her head for a heartbeat when Leafsong agreed to help.

Why is she looking so nervous like that? she thought. *Wouldn't she be glad I was helping her Clan?*

Chapter 6

Chapter 6

Several sunrises had passed, and the forest was still covered in snow. A couple more cats, Whitewing and Honeypaw, became sick with whitecough and moved into the medicine den.

Leafsong couldn't get to sleep since her conversation with Redswirl and Scarpelt. She held the secret that she was helping a rival Clan, but also was worried about Redswirl's actions. *You would think she would want me to help her Clan!*

Leafsong pushed out of the warriors' den. The sky was a clear blue, with a few puffs of cloud. The day wasn't as cold as the beginnings of leaf-bare. Newleaf should be coming any day now.

Longtail and Mousefur, the two elders, have scraped away the snow on some flat rocks and sunned themselves in the early heat. The kits, Icekit and Foxkit, were throwing snow at each other while Daisy watched them, filling in for Ferncloud while she was sick. Everything looked perfect in the camp.

Leafsong padded over beneath the Highledge to where Brambleclaw was giving out the daily patrols.

"-with Brackenfur, Brightheart, and Hollypaw," he was meowing. "Sandstorm, lead a hunting patrol. Take Sorreltail and Leafsong. Hunt by the lake-we haven't been there for a while."

At the call of her name, Leafsong joined Sandstorm and Sorreltail. They were about to exit through the thorn tunnel, until Firestar yowled down from on top of the Highledge. "Is that a hunting patrol? I suppose you won't mind if I join you?" ThunderClan's leader bounded down the crushed rocks to the patrol. When he approached the group, Sandstorm pushed through the bushes out into the oak forest.

The territory was still snowy, but prey had been venturing out again for the coming newleaf. ThunderClan's fresh-kill pile finally got caught up since ShadowClan's raid. The thaw should be coming soon.

By the time they got back to camp, it was near sunhigh. Every cat caught a piece of prey. Leafsong headed over to the fresh-kill pile with the rest of the patrol and lied down her sparrow and rabbit that she had caught.

"That's a huge rabbit, Leafsong," Firestar admired. "You may choose something from the fresh-kill pile." He swept his tail around while meowing loudly, "In fact, we shall feast tonight, in honor of StarClan, for all this prey this late leaf-bare."

Yowl all around the camp exploded, chanting, "StarClan, StarClan!"

Firestar spoke again as the noise died away. "Brambleclaw, send out a couple more patrols."

"Right away, Firestar." The deputy dipped his head as he began organizing two more hunting patrols. "I'll lead one myself with Berrypaw, Cloudtail, and Cinderpaw. Graystripe, take Birchfall, Spiderleg, and Mousepaw. And," he meowed before the cats left. "I want as much fresh-kill on that pile as many cats there are in StarClan." He nodded, "Let's go!"

As the cats split up, Leafsong was about to head towards the flat, hot rocks when she saw Firestar, his pelt as bright as a flame in the sunlight, padding steadily towards her.

"Leafsong, would you want to go hunting again?" he asked. "After you caught that rabbit...."

Leafsong nodded. "Of course, Firestar. The Clan needs all the fresh-kill it can get."

She followed her leader through the thorn bushes into the forest. Prey scent was all around her, making her mouth water. Firestar glanced back at her as they traveled through the woods, searching for prey.

He started purring with amusement. "I see you're excited to eat a juicy piece of fresh-kill, after all these hard times." He sighed. "I am, too, but Leafpool probably isn't. She probably doesn't even notice she's hungry, with all these sick cats. She just gives her fresh-kill to her patients. I'm surprised none of them have greencough...yet. She really needs catmint. They already took the few sprouts by the old Twoleg nest this morning. I can't believe StarClan didn't show her or Jaypaw where catmint is." There was a long pause before he meowed quietly, "Do you think they want ThunderClan to die?"

Leafsong let out a soft unexpected hiss that made her jump a little. *StarClan wouldn't try to kill ThunderClan! What have we done to upset them?* "But," she realized. "They're giving us all this prey!"

Leafsong almost ran into Firestar's rear when he stopped abruptly. He went into the hunter's crouch, sneaking up on a semi-fat squirrel searching for acorns. When Firestar got close enough her leapt, but he jumped too short, startling the prey and sending it towards the nearest tree, which was right next to Leafsong. She blocked the squirrel's path and bit its neck before it got away again.

Firestar shook his pelt and padded over to Leafsong, his eyes gleaming with approval. "Well done, Leafsong. You have a talent for hunting, and you're also a great fighter."

Leafsong's ears perked up in surprise and licked her chest to hide her embarrassment from the praise.

"It's getting dark. It will be time to feast in a bit." The Clan leader and Leafsong padded back towards the camp, ready to eat like kittypets.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7

Leafsong was curled up in her nest, her belly as full as ever. A few cats were still in the clearing finishing up. She closed her eyes, ready for a good night's sleep.

It seemed only a heartbeat later she was woken by a sharp slash on her ear.

"Hey!" she yowled as she opened her eyes. "Watch where you're-"

Leafsong was interrupted as a cat threw her aside and pinned her. She gasped, "Owlheart!" She was in the Dark Forest again!

"Did you really think you could get away from me *that* easily?" the brown she-cat hissed in her face, smiling evilly in amusement.

Leafsong didn't get a chance to speak as Owlheart slashed her muzzle several times, until she managed to kick her attacker off with her strong hind legs. She got up swiftly and faced the Dark Forest cat with unsheathed claws and courage in her eyes.

"What do you want with me?" she meowed bravely.

Owlheart got up and shook out her pelt, scattering pine needles and oak leaves everywhere, and began circling Leafsong. "I wanted to help you," she replied.

"Help me with what?" Leafsong asked uncertainly.

Owlheart's gaze darkened. "To make you a better fighter; a better hunter; a better tracker," there was a short pause. "To make you the best warrior ever."

Leafsong held her breath at the thought of being the best warrior. It would add on to her duty as the Chosen Warrior! But she shook her head to clear the thought. This was a Dark Forest cat! How could

she trust her?

"So?" Owlheart brought her back into what was happening. "What do you think? It's a great deal-just a few scratches for becoming a better warrior."

"I..." Leafsong looked at her paws. "I don't know...."

"Oh, come on!" Owlheart stopped in front of her and spat in her face. "This only comes once in a lifetime. *Any* cat would take the offer. Whoever doesn't is mouse-brained." When Leafsong didn't answer, she sighed. "Fine, I'll give you time to think about it. But you better have your answer in two days-the full moon."

And with that, Owlheart and the Dark Forest faded away. When Leafsong woke up, the blood was running down her muzzle into her nest. Pale daylight shone through the branches of the warriors' den-dawn must just be coming.

She pushed herself up and made her way to the medicine den. When Leafsong rounded the bramble screen, she saw Leafpool and Jaypaw taking care of the sick cats.

"Good morning, Leafsong," Leafpool called to her when she noticed she was there. She glanced at her muzzle. "What in StarClan's name happened to you now?"

Leafsong started rapidly thinking up of an excuse when Brightheart came rushing in.

"Leafpool!" she yowled. "I think Sorreltail has whitecough. She's in the warriors' den."

The medicine cat sighed. "Great StarClan, not another one! Jaypaw, take care of Leafsong for me, will you?" She turned and followed Brightheart out of the den, right on her tail.

Jaypaw already had the herbs for Leafsong's wound. He didn't talk until he finished cleaning them. "I know how you got this," he whispered in a low voice.

Leafsong's heart skipped a few beats. *How could he possibly know?*

She wondered.

The blind gray tom answered the unspoken question. "I know you've been visiting a cat in the Dark Forest. I saw you."

Her heart was pounding now. "What are you going to do now?" she asked nervously.

"Prevent you from letting that cat train you," Jaypaw answered easily. "You know that Dark Forest cats cause nothing but trouble. She's just going to use you, Leafsong."

She narrowed her eyes in aggression. "Why should I listen to *you*?" Jaypaw tried to speak, but Leafsong kept on going. "It's just like Owlheart told me, this only comes once in a lifetime." She turned to leave, glancing over her shoulder as she stormed out of the medicine den growling, "And if you try to stop me from letting her train me, you're just wasting your time." She left, leaving Jaypaw to take care of the rest of the sick cats.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8

It was the day after Leafsong's conversation with Jaypaw. *Why does he want to help me? Why can't he just stay out of my fur?* She was on the sunhigh hunting patrol with Ashfur, Lionpaw, and Squirrelflight. Everyone had caught at least one piece of prey but her.

"Is something wrong, Leafsong?" Squirrelflight asked her. "You usually catch something before anyone else in the patrol."

Leafsong just shook her head, not wanting to talk. Squirrelflight opened her mouth to say something, but Ashfur broke in.

"We should head back," he said, as leader of patrol. "This is enough fresh-kill to-" Ashfur's last few words were cut off as he broke into a fit of coughing.

Squirrelflight rushed over to lend him her shoulder to lean on. "I agree that we should go back. Leafsong, please carry Ashfur's pigeon."

Leafsong picked up the bird and followed the patrol to the camp. When she reached into earshot of it, she heard loud coughing inside. They pushed through the thorn tunnel and saw Spiderleg in the middle of the clearing, crouching down and coughing in the ground, surrounded by cats. Leafpool and Jaypaw were just racing out of the medicine den with herbs. Leafpool glanced over at Ashfur, her eyes worried.

"Bring him into my den; I'll be there in a moment," she told Squirrelflight.

She did as she was told and brought Ashfur slowly up to the den with Lionpaw following. When Leafpool was finished and brought Spiderleg to her den, the cats in the clearing returned to their

normal duties. Leafsong was about to head over to the fresh-kill pile, when she heard her name. She turned and saw Jaypaw padding towards her.

"What do *you* want?" she hissed at him.

"Nice to see you, too," the apprentice muttered. "I wanted to ask you if you could find some catmint. I think I smelled some in ShadowClan. Could you get it for me?" he asked.

Leafsong snorted. "Why don't you get it? Or maybe *ask* another medicine cat for some? No one will attack you!"

Jaypaw's tail tip was flicking annoyingly. "Asking means that ThunderClan is weak, and I need to take care of the sick cats. If I leave, Leafpool will rip my pelt off and start using my body as a medicine!" he growled.

Leafsong calmed down for a moment to think about it, but then something came to her. She tensed her muscles while snapping softly in Jaypaw's face, "No! This is obviously a set up! I'm *not* going in ShadowClan territory-no matter what you do!"

She turned tail, stomped into the warriors' den, and thumped into her nest. She rested her tail on her nose and closed her eyes, trying to sleep her anger away.

Leafsong felt something prod into her side softly. A few heartbeats later it came again, this time sharper. When it came again, sharper than ever, Leafsong snapped her eyes open to look at the cat and yowled, "Will you stop that? I'm trying to-"

She froze as she recognized the tortoiseshell-and-white she-cat with star shine in her fur. Leafsong gasped. "Spottedleaf! I'm sorry, I didn't realize-"

"Hush, Leafsong," she whispered as she brushed her tail tip across Leafsong's mouth. "I know you didn't mean it. We wanted to tell you something."

Leafsong glanced around the clearing she was standing in, surrounded by bracken and hazel bushes. "We? But I don't see any

other cat here," meowed Leafsong confusingly.

Right after she said that two cats, a golden one and a white one, pushed their way through the barrier.

Leafsong couldn't believe her eyes. She ran towards them. "Goldenfur! Whitefang!" she yowled. "I haven't seen you in such a long time!"

Leafsong was purring so loud that she didn't hear her mother. "What did you say?" she asked.

"We know your Clan is going through a hard time," she repeated. "You need catmint.

"Don't tell me," Leafsong muttered. "It's in ShadowClan territory, isn't it?"

Whitefang sighed. "Just because Jaypaw told you this, it doesn't mean you don't have to do it. Jaypaw's going to be the only medicine cat in ThunderClan one day-you might as well start listening to him now. Plus, *StarClan* is telling you. And you're the Chosen Warrior-it is your job to protect the Clans, especially your Clan."

Leafsong sighed slowly. "Okay, but where is the catmint?"

Goldenfur spoke again. "There's catmint on the far side of the territory, past the marshes, and next to the RiverClan border. It is growing underneath a hollow log-ShadowClan doesn't even know it's there yet."

"But wouldn't that be stealing?" Leafsong asked.

Spottedleaf's voice was stern. "Leafsong, your Clan is infected with greencough! If you don't get that catmint, the whole Clan will be sick, and then eventually ThunderClan will disappear."

Leafsong thought for a moment longer, and then nodded her head in agreement. "Okay," she meowed. "I will go get the catmint, no matter what it takes."

Her surroundings and the three StarClan cats faded away, until all Leafsong saw was black.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9

Leafsong woke up a little bit before dawn. All the warriors were still sleeping, their chests steadily rising and falling. *I* need *to go get that catmint!* Leafsong thought to herself. She quietly got up and made her way to the den's exit. She poked her head out through the branches to check the clearing-it was deserted. Leafsong carefully snuck across the clearing to the dirtplace tunnel and pushed through the thorn barrier to the outside of the camp.

She hurried to the border with ShadowClan all the way to where the territory ended. Leafsong hid in some bracken leaves, checking if it was clear to cross. Something was making her stomach hurt. *Come on, scaredy-dog!* Leafsong scolded herself. *StarClan themselves told me to do this-I have to save my Clan.*

Leafsong forced herself to cross the border into ShadowClan territory. She jumped from bush to bush to hide herself. As she continued going deeper and deeper into enemy land, oak trees and fallen leaves were now turning into pine trees and fallen needles.

She glanced up at the sun-it was dawn. *Oh, StarClan! Please don't let a patrol see me!*

Just as she thought that, a ShadowClan patrol appeared through the undergrowth. Leafsong gasped softly and went deep into a juniper berry bush, hoping it would hide her, along with her scent. She held her breath as a white she-cat walked past, tasting the air.

"Snowbird, come back!" a cat yowled farther off. "There's nothing suspicious here."

"Coming, Rowanclaw!" Snowbird called back as she turned around to leave.

Leafsong let out a sigh of relief as the footsteps went away. She

continued her trek through the territory. It felt like a moon before her paws sank through mushy ground and got soaked. She growled in annoyance. *Well, I know I've made it to the marshes!* She muttered under her breath.

Leafsong kept on going, keeping low and hurrying to the nearest patch of tall grass, despite the small coverage. She was a tail length away from dry land when she suddenly sank into the ground. Leafsong gasped in shock and froze as the ice cold water soaked into her fur up to her belly. She struggled to get out of the hole when she saw a hazel bush shaking at the edge of the marsh.

Oh, no! A ShadowClan patrol!

Leafsong struggled even harder, using all her might to try to get out, but it was too late-two cats pushed their way through. She froze with her eyes wide with fear. "Oh, StarClan, forgive me! I'm sorry for-"

Leafsong broke off as she recognized the two cats. She gasped with joy. "Scarpelt! Redswirl! Thank StarClan you're here. I-"

"What are you doing on ShadowClan territory?" Scarpelt interrupted with a hiss.

Leafsong felt a cold chill running down her spine. Her joy then returned as both ShadowClan cats started *mmrowing* with laughter.

"You should have seen the look on your face!" Scarpelt exclaimed between purrs.

"Relax, Leafsong. We would never hurt you," meowed Redswirl after she calmed down. She glanced so fast at her Clanmate that Leafsong could have imagined it.

"Ha, ha," she meowed sarcastically. "Now that you had your fun, could you maybe help me out of here?"

"Of course," answered Redswirl, who fastened her teeth into Leafsong's scruff. She pulled, with Scarpelt pushing from behind. Finally, Leafsong got her front legs free and clawed the rest of the way out. She got blasted by the late leaf-bare wind and started

shivering wildly.

"Whoa, are you okay?" asked Scarpelt, his head tilted to one side. "You can stay here if you like."

Leafsong shook her head and meowed between chattering teeth, "I need to do something important." She began to turn and head towards the RiverClan border again when Scarpelt stopped her.

"Wait," he meowed. "Are you going to the Gathering tonight?" Leafsong simply shook her head. "Then meet us at the Twoleg nest before dawn, ok?"

She nodded and, not wanting to answer any more questions, dashed off towards RiverClan territory. "See you at dawn!" she called over her shoulder, and disappeared out of sight behind the trees. The image of Redswirl's scared face and Scarpelt's hatred face burned in her mind when she glanced at them as she left.

Why are they like that? Is something wrong? Did I *do something wrong?*

She kept on going, only thinking about her surrounding and Redswirl's and Scarpelt's expressions.

*****

Leafsong finally saw the border with RiverClan and looked for where the StarClan cats told her where the catmint is-underneath a hollow log.

When she found it, with it covered in moss and cobwebs, she dug her hind claws into the ground, pushed the log, and rolled it over to uncover the hidden catmint. Leafsong took as much catmint as she could carry in her jaws and headed back to her own familiar territory.

Leafsong got back to the camp around sunhigh. She went straight to the medicine den. Her heart stopped for a moment when she saw only Jaypaw in the den, taking care of the sick warriors.

"Where's Leafpool?" she asked him, her voice muffled.

He didn't answer the question as he noticed the herb in her mouth. "Is that catmint?" he asked her as he padded up to her. "Where did you find it?"

Leafsong only set it down in front of Jaypaw's paws and meowed, "You're welcome." She turned to leave to be stopped by the apprentice.

"Wait," he called. "I thought you *weren't* going to get catmint. What made you change your mind?"

Leafsong snorted. "Let's just say that when *you* tell me to do something, I don't have to. But when *StarClan* tell me to do something, I do have to."

Jaypaw's ears perked up and his neck fur started to bristle. "How can you not listen to me? I'm your medicine cat!"

"*Apprentice,*" Leafsong added on. "You don't know enough for a warrior to listen to you. And plus, what would StarClan tell an apprentice? If anything, they'll tell there prophecies and omens to *full* medicine cats."

Tired of the argument, Leafsong turned and padded out of the den with Jaypaw yowling after her, "Don't know enough? You know *nothing* about herbs! You'll listen to me one day-you'll see!"

Chapter 10

Chapter 10

Leafsong stood outside the warriors' den as she watched her chosen Clanmates follow Firestar through the thorn tunnel for the Gathering. Only Cloudtail and Brightheart were left in the clearing, finishing up the pigeon they were sharing when Leafsong turned to go in the den and curl up in her nest. Darkness quickly grabbed her as she closed her eyes, only to be woken by the soft call of her name.

Snapping her eyes open, she saw that she was lying on the forest floor, surrounded by bracken and thorn bushes. Leafsong stood up and turned around to see Owlheart sitting with her tail wrapped neatly around her paws.

"So?" the Dark Forest she-cat meowed as she pushed herself up. "Do you?"

Leafsong tilted her head to one side, puzzled. "Do I what?"

Owlheart flicked her tail irritability. "Do you want me to train you?" she snapped.

Leafsong blinked. She has forgotten about that. "Oh, err...."

She thought about it one last time. She was about to meow no, when she remembered something. *I* have *to show Jaypaw that I don't need him!* Leafsong vowed to herself.

She nodded. "Alright, Owlheart, I'll let you train me."

She noticed Owlheart's ears perk up in success. "Good, because I could see that your old mentor didn't teach you skills that I know." The she-cat turned around and beckoned Leafsong to follow her. They padded through the big forest until they came to a larger clearing than the last one. "We will begin your training now,"

Owlheart announced.

Leafsong let out a small gasp in surprise. "*Now?* But I'm not-"

She stopped as Owlheart suddenly spun around and jumped at her, pinning her down all in a single heartbeat.

"First lesson," her new mentor spat at her, her yellowed teeth showing. "*Always* be ready for a fight!"

The brown she-cat did a front blow on Leafsong's muzzle, making her yowl as she felt the pain surge and blood pour out of her nostrils. She swiftly bit down hard on Owlheart's paw and scraped her belly as she reared up. Owlheart landed another hard blow, this time on top of Leafsong's head, making her vision blurry. Owlheart disappeared for a moment until she landed on her back. Leafsong's opponent dug her claws into her side to hold on. Leafsong yowled and crouched, letting her weight go.

Owlheart snorted. "Mouse brain! I told you that you needed more training."

Leafsong felt the sharp fangs as the Dark Forest cat bent down and pinched her teeth into Leafsong's scruff. Suddenly, Leafsong brought all her weight back to rear up, causing Owlheart to fly off her. Leafsong turned to face the defeated cat.

She purred in amusement. "Am I the one who needs more training now?" She stood there, panting.

Owlheart slowly got up and shook the dirt off her pelt. She panted, too, as she meowed, "Good job. I guess you're stronger than I expected." Leafsong straightened proudly. "Let's see how you do next time. I'll get you when I'm ready."

When the beaten she-cat was done, she padded away, until she and Leafsong's other surroundings were gone.

*****

Leafsong woke up in the warriors' den and listened for any birdsong-nothing. *It must be a little before dawn,* she thought. After

getting up and shaking the moss off her pelt, she made her way quietly to the entrance of the den, careful not to wake any sleeping cats.

Leafsong crossed the clearing swiftly, her bones still aching from Owlheart's training session. She pushed through the dirtplace tunnel to the outside of the camp, hoping not to alarm Cloudtail, who was sitting outside the thorn tunnel, his eyes fixed on the forest beyond.

She made her way to the ShadowClan border and traveled towards the Twoleg nest where Redswirl and Scarpelt had told her to meet them. Leafsong wondered why they wanted her to come. *Do they want to repay me for helping their Clan? Does their Clan need* more *help?*

Leafsong barely noticed that she'd reached the nest until a fluttering bird snapped her back to the present. She looked up at the old broken nest, most of its walls fallen down and the rafters looking like they would fall any moment.

She padded cautiously inside the nest, looking around for the two ShadowClan cats. "Redswirl? Scarpelt?" she called. "Are you here?"

When the only reply back was her own voice echoing off the hollow room, Leafsong sat down and looked up at the stars through the beams, waiting.

Where are they? Have they forgotten?

Just as she was getting up to go search for them, a yowl came behind her. Leafsong turned around and froze as she saw a cat emerge behind a pile of crumbled brick and ran towards her. Before she could defend herself, the strange cat pinned her to the ground, his strong muscles tense. Leafsong was struggling to escape when another yowl came.

Oh, no! Not another cat!

She forced all of her strength to kick off the attacking cat and hit

him hard on the head to blur his vision. She skillfully copied what Owlheart had done to her, leaping and digging her claws into her opponent's back.

When he had finally collapsed, Leafsong did the same to the other cat and pinned them both with one paw planted firmly on their chests. Now that she could see their faces, she gasped as she recognized them.

"Redswirl! Scarpelt!" she meowed surprisingly. "Why did you attack me?"

Redswirl spoke after Leafsong let them get up, worry and fear in her eyes. "Sorry, we thought it was a different cat." Her fur was still sticking up as she spoke urgently. "Leafsong, we wanted to thank you for helping us, even though we didn't need it."

Leafsong tipped her head in confusion. "I thought ShadowClan really needed fresh-kill."

Redswirl shook her head. "We still should thank you. I know it must have been really hard to spare several pieces of fresh-kill to your pile this leaf-bare." She dipped her head and her fur began to lie flat again, as in relief. "Now, you may-"

Redswirl's fur shot straight up and her last words became a shriek of terror as Scarpelt threw her back against a standing wall with claws unsheathed, scraping her in the progress. He began circling Leafsong to keep her from fleeing. His claws were stretched outs, his teeth bared, and his eyes hungry for battle. Fire seemed to light in his eyes as he finished Redswirl's sentence himself.

"Die!"

Scarpelt jumped at Leafsong, slashing her face and biting her paws as she swung them aimlessly at him. Scarpelt suddenly bent down to trip Leafsong's hind legs, sending her crashing down. He pinned Leafsong, digging his claws deep into her skin until she yowled with pain.

She barely heard Scarpelt as he spat, "How are *you* even the Chosen

Warrior? If anything, it should be a ShadowClan cat, because it seems like Firestar doesn't teach his warriors any battle skills!"

He aimed a blow at Leafsong's throat, freezing to look over as he and Leafsong heard a loud yowl from Redswirl, who had regained consciousness.

"Scarpelt, stop!" she screeched as she raced towards them, claws unsheathed, teeth bared, and eyes burning with rage. In one smooth motion, Redswirl jumped right over Leafsong, taking Scarpelt with her with her claws in his neck. She pinned her Clanmate to the ground. "I will *not* let you kill the Chosen Warrior! And to keep you from doing it, I'll kill *you*!"

Scarpelt stared up at her, panting. "You wouldn't. You even said yourself that you would never kill!"

Redswirl narrowed her eyes and growled. "The warrior code says that you can kill if it is necessary, and if it's about you, it's necessary!" She gave a yowl, bent her head, and sank her teeth into his throat.

Blood poured out of his throat and up is mouth as Scarpelt spoke for the last time. "StarClan will never forgive you, Redswirl, never!"

She snorted. "Never forgive me? How about you?"

A silent sigh came out of Scarpelt as his final breath left his body, his eyes glazed and staring at nothing. Leafsong lay there, staring at Redswirl panting and Scarpelt's lifeless bleeding body. When Redswirl turned her head towards her, Leafsong quickly got up with her claws still unsheathed.

Redswirl padded toward her and lifted up a paw to show that she didn't have her claws out. "Relax," she meowed friendly. "I won't hurt you, Chosen Warrior."

Leafsong reluctantly put her claws away. "Why did you kill Scarpelt-your Clanmate?" she asked.

Redswirl sat down and wrapped her tail around her paws. "Because I didn't want him to kill you," she answered quietly. "He forced me

to help him kill you. He said that if I didn't join him, that he would kill me."

Leafsong's eyes grew wide with shock. "So you *were* going to kill me?"

Redswirl shook her head. "I never wanted to. Scarpelt said that he could do the killing, and that I can just fight beside him. But I still didn't want to hurt you."

Leafsong nodded slowly as she took all the information in. "Well," she meowed. "Thank you for not hurting me, but helping me." She started walking towards the front of the nest where she entered from. She glanced over her shoulder and meowed, "I'd better get back to the camp. Some cats might be looking for me."

Redswirl nodded. "I'd better get back, too." She looked at her Clanmate. "I'll have to tell Blackstar that a fox or something killed him." She looked back at Leafsong. "See you later?"

"Later!" Leafsong agreed as she padded back towards ThunderClan territory. She had started limping as she got to the camp. She glanced up at the sun-it was already sunhigh.

Gasps of shock went throughout the camp as Leafsong pushed through the thorn barrier. She ignored the questions and comments as she made her way through the crowd to the medicine cat den. When she rounded the bramble screen, Leafpool was already getting the herbs for Leafsong's wounds. The den seemed so empty since all of the sick cats had left it, thanks to Leafsong.

She lied down to let Leafpool put on some cobwebs and marigold juice. When she had finished, she asked Leafsong, "So what happened this time?" She glanced over at Jaypaw, who was sitting at the edge of the pool, and leaned closer to Leafsong. "Does he know?"

Leafsong ignored the snort Jaypaw gave as she answered, "Yes, he knows."

Leafpool beckoned Jaypaw to come, after he already started coming

this way. "So, tell me," she meowed after he sat down. "Who was the danger? How did you fight it off?"

Leafsong shifted around until she got comfortable. *This is going to be a long story,* she thought.

"Well," she began. "It started when ShadowClan attacked the camp...."

~*~*~*~*~*~

I hope you enjoyed it! Did you remeber to vote on any parts? :D

Okay, again, I don't know when I'll be posting the fourth book of this series (it's the last finished book so far). So keep tune when it does come out! Bensvelk veyet'toon! Good bye!